

WASHINGTON - House and Senate Appropriators today approved the inclusion of language protecting Impact Aid payments to help North Chicago, Highland Park and Glenview schools. The language was based on H.R. 12, introduced by Congressman Mark Kirk on January 4, 2007. Senators Durbin and Obama backed companion legislation in the Senate.

Under the bill, all children of parents working at Naval Station Great Lakes and Fort Sheridan will be officially counted for Impact Aid purposes as part of the North Chicago school district. This reform will protect North Chicago's "Heavy Impact" aid payments of over \$6,000 per student. Two years ago, North Chicago schools fell below the 30 percent military-child qualification to get Heavy Impact Aid, threatening the loss of nearly \$7 million in federal assistance. Working with Secretary of Education Spellings, Congressman Kirk invoked an unused provision of Impact Aid law to protect aid to North Chicago schools until the reforms of H.R. 12 are enacted.

Glenview and Highwood/Highland Park schools will also benefit. Since their children will be considered "Heavy Impact Aid" students under the new reform, reimbursements for education costs will rise from \$600 per child to approximately \$6,000. The increased funding under these reforms will be shared under an agreement between the three school districts. The new aid will particularly help these school districts now in the middle of an upgrade of housing in North Chicago, Fort Sheridan and Glenview.

"This is a bipartisan win for Glenview, Highwood/Highland Park and North Chicago," said Congressman Kirk. "I want to thank Senators Durbin and Obama for overcoming the initial opposition from Senator Harkin (D-IA). This reform was initially drafted by Mayor Michael Belsky (Highland Park), Mayor Kerry Cummings (Glenview) and Mayor Leon Rockingham (North Chicago). I also want to thank Rep. Jim Walsh (R-NY) who fought hard to make sure our Impact Aid reform was in the final bill."

The Impact Aid reforms are now scheduled to be considered as part of a combined set of appropriations bills next week. While the final legislation is still controversial for other reasons, the final enactment of the Impact Aid reform is expected by year's end.